

09-17-18-19, 1982, page 1

I arrived in Carbondale on a Short Line bus--the first one I have taken in a long time. I knew that WSP and HLPB had just bought a new car and I was expecting to see the family car at the bus station. What did I see? WSP and his new "Eagle." Very jaunty. WSP and his sports car. I think it's wonderful that he has bought a second car for himself. When WSP picked me up at the bus in Carbondale, his car had 23 miles on it, in total. Regrettably, there were no newspapers/calendars at Box 29. I felt like I had been punched in the stomach. On Saturday morning I went into town and went to the Post Office, the News and Goodwill--my three usual stops in Carbondale in the morning when I arrive there on CRCCH weekends. I went to the Library and visited with Miss Muldoon. She let me borrow some audio-cassettes from the Library's holdings: The Carbondale Story by Mayor Frank P. Kelly (sides one and two), The Gravity Railroad by Mr. Frank P. Kelly (sides one and two)... Also I borrowed from the CPL: "Anthracite Coal Mining: Early History, Methods and Labor in Northeastern Pennsylvania" by Jos. G. Datto, 1976; Datto's history is accompanied by a cassette tape interview with Mr. Joseph Parise of Carbondale, Pa. 1976. While at the CPL I called JVB from Mrs. Prince's desk: he was there with his cousin. I suggested that we go and look for the Gravity Railroad marker that used to stand in White's Crossing. Fine, said JVB. We went up to White's Crossing and looked around but didn't find the marker. JVB and his cousin and I went into 301 and looked at the room. JVB served as host--showing his cousin around. We sat at the three table chairs and enjoyed the view and discussed the restoration. Like everyone else who is in a room that is high above the ground, John's cousin looked out the windows and enjoyed the view from high up in Carbondale. We drove with the Eagle up to JVB's cousin's house--Ference vicinity--and JVB's cousin picked up his CETA check and JVB and his cousin discussed riding on their motor bikes. Apparently his cousin had stayed over at 46 Canaan Street and JVB and cousin were having a fun time together--exploring and carrying on and such. We left the cousin at his house on Salem Mountain and I dropped JVB off at his house. In the early evening I listened to some of the tapes that I borrowed from Miss Muldoon. On first hearing, my response is that the tapes are poorly made and not terribly substantial in content. It is nice to have a tape of Mayor Kelly talking about Carbondale, however. My general state of mind was depression, given the fact that the calendars did not arrive. Once again, I travelled to PA after I had been told by Lohbauer that the calendars would be there on Friday and the calendars were not there. I was angry and depressed and out of confidence. When I think of the fact that I practically made myself physically ill getting the mechanicals of the calendar to Lohbauer by August 10th, I could weep. Here it is, almost five weeks later and the calendars still haven't been printed yet. On Sunday morning I went down to RTP's house at about 9 A.M. and we prepared the sign post for the marker, the Carbondale historical marker that will be installed by City Hall and dedicated on 09-25-1982 at 10 A.M. RTP has done a splendid job of attaching the bottom of the post to the top of the post. The bottom part of the historical marker is the post from Fallbrook Street, the top part of the marker is the part from the damaged sign at Childs. Together, we have a good historical marker holder. At about 11 A.M. we departed for Carbondale City Hall. As we arrived at the area where the sign was to be installed, Skip Race and Ronnie Spangenburg (his friend) arrived out of nowhere and introduced themselves. The Times of 09-17-1982 carried the notice of the installation on the 25th and stated that one of the historical markers was missing. Skip Race read the notice and called HLRP on the 17th in the early evening to say that he knew where the sign was--in some kids' hut on Salem Mountain. He had seen it earlier this month when walking on Salem Mountain with his children and dogs. Skip Race delivered the sign to the Homestead and it was leaning up against the garage door when I arrived on Friday night. How extraordinary. Less than four hours after the story appeared in the Times the missing sign was recovered. Skip Race was being very friendly. I called him early on Saturday morning to thank him for the sign and we chatted for about fifteen minutes. He repeatedly asked how he could help with the restoration movement. I told him to come to the installation ceremonies on the 25th. He asked if I would share some of the information that I have with his friend Ronnie Spangenburg from Honesdale. Yes, by all means,

09-17-18-19, 1982, page 2

said I. Spangenburg is interested in Gravity Railroad material. Spangenburg and Race apparently are collectors of fossils, and I am sure that they came across the missing historical marker while walking in the woods looking for fossils. Joseph Pascoe also showed up to see what was going on with the pole. He and RTP were involved in digging the hole while I chatted with Race and Spangenburg. One of Pascoe's colleagues from the High School came by and said: "Joe Pascoe, what are you doing digging a hole by City Hall." "Well," said Joe Pascoe, "I have to supplement my salary somehow." We all laughed. It was a very nice moment. David Baum was there. He handed me the signed withdrawal slips from the Liberty Bank. We chatted warmly. It was a grand moment. Pascoe, RTP, Skip Race, Spangenburg, SRP, several passers-by. All the while the historical marker post was being installed. To make the moment even more delicious, the article by Kevin O'Hara about the restoration movement in Carbondale was in THE SCRANTONIAN that morning. About six things were coming together and it all felt very nice. At about noon I called JVB and got him involved in the project. He had already called HLRP and said that he was available for whatever. Joe Pascoe drove me up to JVB's and we picked him up. In the car on the way back to City Hall, Pascoe and JVB and I talked about Henry VIII and Thomas Moore and the wives of Henry VIII. It was very pleasant. Out of the blue, JVB quoted Becket: "If I had served God as well as I have served my King..." Wonderful. JVB is on his way. After the pole was firmly in the ground, JVB and RTP and I went out to the country. On the way out in the truck, I asked RTP if he would like to join JVB and I for a visit to Kurt Reed's General Store. Yes, said RTP. When we arrived at the Homestead, we learned that at about mid-day that Ann's two cousins (Ken and Dave) had been in an automobile accident in front of the Homestead. Ken had cut his leg with a saw and was being driven to the hospital by Dave, who passed out in the car and went off the road in front of Russin's. What a frightening accident. They are both OK at the moment. WSP was visibly shaken by the accident, as was Ann. RTP and JVB and I departed for Kurt's in the early afternoon. We found Kurt to be not at home and so I decided to drive to Clinton Township. I drove through Clinton Cemetery and we went up the road "under the mountain" and I showed RTP where the Squire family settled in 1812 when they arrived in Clinton Township. We then drove up through Curtis Valley and RTP suggested that we go to Carbondale and have a look at the building that Skip Race told me about (a large, three-story, wooden building with a sloped roof back in the area of the roundhouse--between the roundhouse and where Pettinato parks his trucks). We arrived in Carbondale by means of the New York, Ontario and Western Railway Tracks between Browndale and Carbondale. You can actually drive on the tracks, rather the roadbed, from Browndale to Carbondale, and that is what we did, in WSP's new Eagle. Very exciting. We all enjoyed ourselves very much. RTP and JVB walked part of the way and I drove the Eagle. As one drives the roadbed, one can sense the hill from Simpson to Forest City--so many stories have come down about the pusher engines on the roadbed from Carbondale to Forest City. There are some wonderful photographs of the trains on this portion of the tracks of the O&W. The tracks come out in Simpson just below the Morse Homestead. After we left the O&W tracks, we drove over into the D&H yard and drove to Carbondale on the grounds of the D&H. Such fun we had. RTP, JVB and I all enjoyed ourselves enormously. We found the building that Skip Race spoke of and it seems to be filled with all manner of things. JVB wanted to enter the building, but I discouraged that because we don't know whose building it is and we didn't have permission. We drove JVB home. WSP drove me to the 9:35 Martz bus in Scranton, and that was that. An enjoyable weekend, all in all. In the course of our ride, RTP suggested that the Brookvalley 4-H and Community Club and the CRCCH jointly walk the roadbed of the gravity railroad from White's Crossing to Waymart.